



# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the-Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

Virginia Marine Resources Commission  
Recreational Fishing Online Reporting





Recreational Saltwater Fishing

Welcome Jgrist,

Red Drum Reports are Needed!

We are collecting length data from red drum that anglers catch-and-release. In 2009, there will be a coastwide (Virginia to Florida) stock assessment of the red drum population, and information is lacking on the catch-and-release of red drum outside of the management slot limit (16 to 26 inches).

New 2008 Tautog Regs

Closed Season	May 1 through June 24
Minimum Size Limit	14 inches
Possession Limit	4 per person

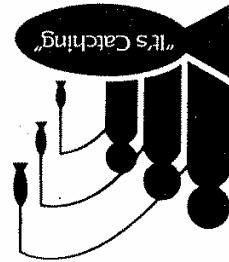
June 16, 2008

Members: 1,457  
Trips: 295  
Catches: 3,941

Related Links

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the-Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

Virginia Marine Resources Commission  
Recreational Fishing Online Reporting





June 16, 2008

Members: 1,457  
Trips: 295  
Catches: 3,941

Recreational Saltwater Fishing

Welcome Jgrist,

Red Drum Reports are Needed!

We are collecting length data from red drum that anglers catch-and-release. In 2009, there will be a coastwide (Virginia to Florida) stock assessment of the red drum population, and information is lacking on the catch-and-release of red drum outside of the management slot limit (16 to 26 inches).

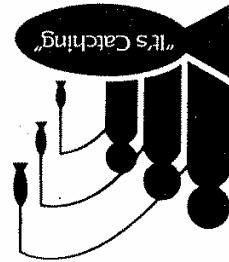
New 2008 Tautog Regs

Closed Season	May 1 through June 24
Minimum Size Limit	14 inches
Possession Limit	4 per person

Related Links

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the- Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

Virginia Marine Resources Commission  
Recreational Fishing Online Reporting





June 16, 2008

Members: 1,457  
Trips: 295  
Catches: 3,941

Recreational Saltwater Fishing

Welcome Jgrist,

Red Drum Reports are Needed!

We are collecting length data from red drum that anglers catch-and-release. In 2009, there will be a coastwide (Virginia to Florida) stock assessment of the red drum population, and information is lacking on the catch-and-release of red drum outside of the management slot limit (16 to 26 inches).

New 2008 Tautog Regs

Closed Season

Minimum Size Limit

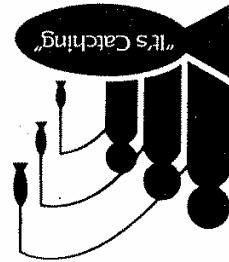
Possession Limit

May 1 through June 24  
14 inches  
4 per person

7

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the-Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

Virginia Marine Resources Commission  
Recreational Fishing Online Reporting



Recreational Saltwater Fishing

Welcome Jgrist,

Red Drum Reports are Needed!

We are collecting length data from red drum that anglers catch-and-release. In 2009, there will be a coastwide (Virginia to Florida) stock assessment of the red drum population, and information is lacking on the catch-and-release of red drum outside of the management slot limit (18 to 26 inches).

New 2008 Tautog Regs

Closed Season	May 1 through June 24
Minimum Size Limit	14 inches
Possession Limit	4 per person

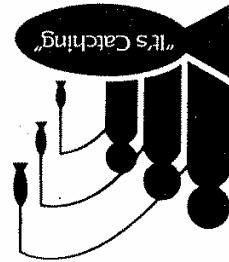
June 16, 2008

Members: 1,457  
Trips: 295  
Catches: 3,941

Related Links

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the-Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

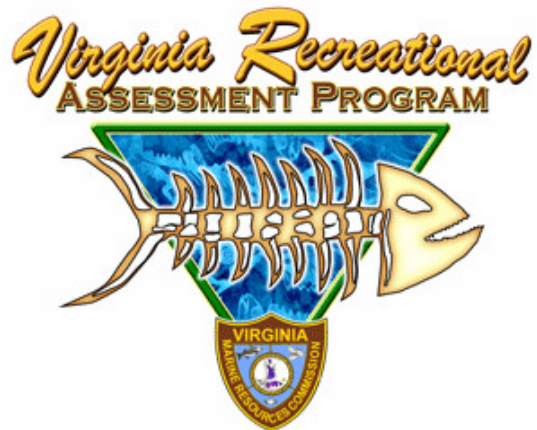
Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

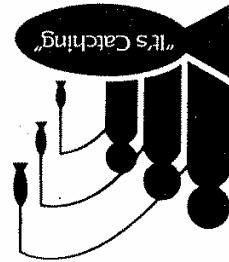
Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

A screenshot of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's "Recreational Fishing Online Reporting" website. The page has a blue header with the commission's name and logo. Below the header, there's a section titled "Recreational Saltwater Fishing" with a "Welcome Jgrist," message. A prominent message states "Red Drum Reports are Needed!" and explains that they are collecting length data from red drum caught-and-release for a stock assessment. Another section titled "New 2008 Tautog Regs" lists fishing regulations: Closed Season (May 1 through June 24), Minimum Size Limit (14 inches), and Possession Limit (4 per person). A statistics box on the left shows data for June 16, 2008: Members: 1,457, Trips: 295, and Catches: 3,941. At the bottom, there are "Related Links" and "Help" sections.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the-Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

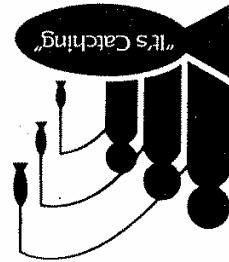
Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

A screenshot of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's "Recreational Fishing Online Reporting" website. The page has a blue header with the commission's name and logo. Below the header, there's a section titled "Recreational Saltwater Fishing" with a "Welcome Jgrist," message. A prominent message states "Red Drum Reports are Needed!" and explains that they are collecting length data from red drum that anglers catch-and-release. Another section titled "New 2008 Tautog Regs" lists fishing regulations: Closed Season (May 1 through June 24), Minimum Size Limit (14 inches), and Possession Limit (4 per person). On the left side, there's a box showing statistics for "June 16, 2008": Members: 1,457, Trips: 295, and Catches: 3,941. The Virginia Recreational Assessment Program logo is also visible on the left.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the-Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

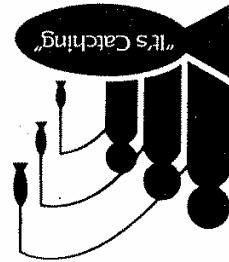
Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

A screenshot of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's Recreational Fishing Online Reporting website. The header includes the commission's name and logo. The main content area features a "Welcome Jgrist," message, a "Red Drum Reports are Needed!" notice, and a "New 2008 Tautog Regs" section. A sidebar on the left shows the "Virginia Recreational Assessment Program" logo and statistics for June 16, 2008: Members: 1,457, Trips: 295, Catches: 3,941. The bottom of the page has a "Related Links" section.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the- Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

A screenshot of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's "Recreational Fishing Online Reporting" website. The header includes the commission's name and logo. The main content area is titled "Recreational Saltwater Fishing" and includes a welcome message. It features two prominent announcements: "Red Drum Reports are Needed!" and "New 2008 Tautog Regs". A statistics box on the left shows data for June 16, 2008, including members, trips, and catches. At the bottom, there are links for "Related Links" and "Help".

Virginia Marine Resources Commission  
Recreational Fishing Online Reporting

Virginia Recreational ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Recreational Saltwater Fishing  
Welcome Jgrist,

**Red Drum Reports are Needed!**

We are collecting length data from red drum that anglers catch-and-release. In 2009, there will be a coastwide (Virginia to Florida) stock assessment of the red drum population, and information is lacking on the catch-and-release of red drum outside of the management slot limit (18 to 26 inches).

**New 2008 Tautog Regs**

Closed Season	May 1 through June 24
Minimum Size Limit	14 inches
Possession Limit	4 per person

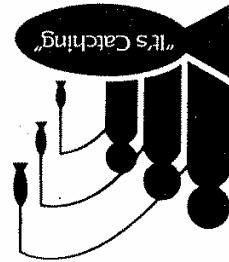
June 16, 2008

Members: 1,457  
Trips: 295  
Catches: 3,941

Related Links

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the- Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

Virginia Marine Resources Commission  
Recreational Fishing Online Reporting



Recreational Saltwater Fishing

Welcome Jgrist,

Red Drum Reports are Needed!

We are collecting length data from red drum that anglers catch-and-release. In 2009, there will be a coastwide (Virginia to Florida) stock assessment of the red drum population, and information is lacking on the catch-and-release of red drum outside of the management slot limit (16 to 26 inches).

New 2008 Tautog Regs

Closed Season	May 1 through June 24
Minimum Size Limit	14 inches
Possession Limit	4 per person

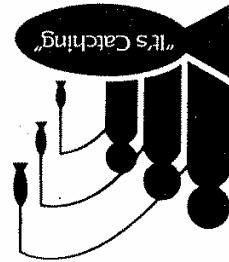
June 16, 2008

Members: 1,457  
Trips: 295  
Catches: 3,941

Related Links

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the-Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

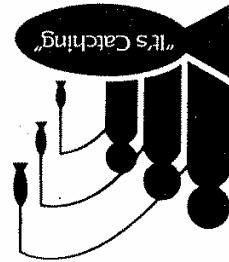
Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

A screenshot of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's "Recreational Fishing Online Reporting" website. The page has a blue header with the commission's name and logo. Below the header, there's a section titled "Recreational Saltwater Fishing" with a "Welcome Jgrist," message. A prominent message states "Red Drum Reports are Needed!" and explains that they are collecting length data from red drum that anglers catch-and-release. Another section titled "New 2008 Tautog Regs" lists fishing regulations: Closed Season (May 1 through June 24), Minimum Size Limit (14 inches), and Possession Limit (4 per person). A statistics box on the left shows data for June 16, 2008: Members: 1,457, Trips: 295, and Catches: 3,941. At the bottom, there are "Related Links" and "Help" sections.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the-Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

A screenshot of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's "Recreational Fishing Online Reporting" website. The header includes the commission's name and logo. The main content area is titled "Recreational Saltwater Fishing" and includes a welcome message. It features two prominent announcements: "Red Drum Reports are Needed!" and "New 2008 Tautog Regs". A sidebar on the left shows statistics for June 16, 2008, including members, trips, and catches. At the bottom, there are links for "Related Links" and "Help".

Virginia Marine Resources Commission  
Recreational Fishing Online Reporting

Virginia Recreational ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Recreational Saltwater Fishing  
Welcome Jgrist,

**Red Drum Reports are Needed!**

We are collecting length data from red drum that anglers catch-and-release. In 2009, there will be a coastwide (Virginia to Florida) stock assessment of the red drum population, and information is lacking on the catch-and-release of red drum outside of the management slot limit (18 to 26 inches).

**New 2008 Tautog Regs**

Closed Season	May 1 through June 24
Minimum Size Limit	14 inches
Possession Limit	4 per person

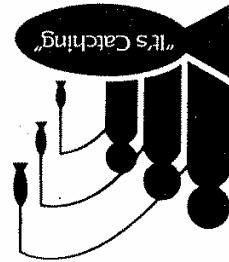
June 16, 2008

Members: 1,457  
Trips: 295  
Catches: 3,941

Related Links

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





# *The Virginia Saltwater Review*

Plans and Statistics Department  
2600 Washington Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Newport News, VA 23607-0756  
<http://www.mrc.virginia.gov>

Vol. 22, No. 14  
July 18, 2008

by

**Department of Plans and Statistics, Fisheries Management Division**

## **OVERVIEW**

Record-breaking king mackerel were caught at the local piers this week. Most of the usual players (croaker, spot and sea mullet) are showing up at the piers, tarpon have arrived as well. In the Outer Banks, swells from Hurricane Bertha continue to roll in, and this seems to have had a positive impact on fishing over the past week. Offshore, tuna remains hot, and billfish action is improving.



**REMEMBER:** The flounder fishery is closed Monday, July 21 through July 30 in Virginia.



Thanks to Jerry Thrash at Queen's Creek Outfitters for these great photo's of some of our Junior Anglers!



## **THE FISHING REPORT**

### **Chincoteague**

Staff at Captain Bob's report that fishing continues to be successful around Chincoteague. Flounder and kingfish are still keeping anglers busy with the best catches coming in from Buoy 15 and the waters in front of Captain Bob's. Offshore action has remained productive as well—a 96-pound bluefin tuna was recently recorded.

### **Wachapreague**

Loads of bluefin tuna were reported from the Wachapreague Marina. Most are in the 80- to 90- pound range, although some are bigger. The yellowfin tuna bite has started, and anglers are also finding dolphin, wahoo, tilefish, and grouper. Inshore, flounder fishing continues—a 7.5 pound flounder was weighed in last week.

According to staff at Captain Zeds, offshore action has been fantastic. Bluefin tuna were plentiful at the Lumpy Bottom; there were 3 citations, and the biggest was 226 pounds. Dolphin citations came in from the 30 Fathom Line. Overall, the catch was a mix of wahoo, dolphin, bluefin tuna, and yellowfin tuna. There were also rumors of white marlin. Inshore, bottom fishing was still doing well with flounder catches by Cedar Island and the Coast Guard Station. Numerous kingfish were found inside and outside of the Wachapreague Inlet. Wreck fishing produced catches of black sea bass.

### **Onancock**

Captain Wil reports slow fishing in Onancock. Everyone can catch a few fish, but very few big ones. Large croaker have been sighted, but only the small ones are biting. Small bluefish are available mixed with sea mullet and spot. A few small shark are beginning to show up. Very few flounder large enough to keep are being hooked. The best fishing is late evening and early morning, due to the heat. Water temperatures are in the 80s.

### **Cape Charles**

According to staff at Chris' Bait and Tackle, a citation croaker (over three pounds) was hooked at Oyster this week. Anglers are also catching spot at the Cape Charles and Kiptopeke Piers. Limits of flounder were caught this week, and 6 citations were awarded between the Cell and Buoy 42. Spadefish are biting Fishbites brand easy clam strips around the Chesapeake Light and the 4<sup>th</sup> island of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Offshore action includes nice catches of dolphin and bluefin tuna; the best spots were at the Crotch area.

### **Lower Bay/Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel**

Several citations were reported from Sunset Boating Center this week. The first was a 9-pound, 8-ounce flounder caught off of Cape Henry. A 69-pound, 69-inch cobia was landed in the Bluefish Rock area where

there are reports of numerous cobia. Offshore, a 185-pound blue marlin was recorded.

It was a busy weekend at Salt Ponds Marina. Drum citations include a 47-inch and a 48-inch black drum caught at Cape Henry and three red drum (46 to 48 inches) caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel using bucktail. Two 8-pound, 2-ounce flounder were caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (one was at the High Rise), and another 8-pound flounder was landed at bluefish rock. Spadefish up to 24 inches were biting at the Light Tower.

A flounder fishing tournament was held last weekend at the York River Fishing center benefiting the Gloucester Boys and Girls Club. There were four citations, and the winner was 9 pounds, 2 ounces. The flounder bite was really great around the Cell and Buoy 42, but the largest fish was caught at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Also, there was plenty of action at the Gloucester Point Pier.

Dr. Julie Ball, IGFA International Representative for Virginia Beach, contributed the following:

The weather is great, its summer time, and the fish are here. So what could be better? The debut of the much anticipated and prized Virginia king mackerel. The arrival of these toothy hunters kicks off the pier angler's big scene. These fish are one of the most desirable species within range of the fishing piers. And a big scene it is, since once again the first reported king landing of the year is coming from the Little Island Fishing Pier this week. Two kings, with one smoker exceeding 50-pounds, were hooked from the pier using live bait on a pin rig, while another king was also landed from the Virginia Beach Fishing Pier using similar techniques.

Although king mackerel will dominate much of the interest along the beaches, nice Spanish mackerel continue to hit small spoons trolled at 6 to 8 knots along the beach in about 25 feet of water. Use small planers or 4 to 6 oz in line sinkers to place the spoons within range.

Flounder seem to be on everyone's mind as folks find good luck with limits of nice fish, with several weighing in at over 10-pounds. Most of the larger fish are hitting live bait along lower bay structure, but drifters are also scoring with respectable fish. The hottest spots for dragging baits for flounder are the Baltimore Channel, the eastern section of the Thimble Shoal Channel, and the Cell and Buoy 36A areas. For live baiters, the Cell, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and inshore wrecks are still providing very good results. Be mindful of the flounder closure from July 21<sup>st</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Cobia are starting to show signs of their late summer pattern as they begin grouping in the lower bay and along coastal waters. More cobia are cruising the top waters, but most of the fish within the bay are only ranging to around 30-pounds. A few larger fish to over 70-pounds are coming from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel structure and from the oceanfront buoy lines and wrecks.

Big red drum also continue to provide good top water action as they school around lower bay shoals and structure. Ben Shepherd and Rudy Levasseur, both of Chesapeake, had a good day when they released six bull reds hooked from a school they spotted while flounder fishing this week. Although not drawing much interest lately, black drum are also still hitting for casters around the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> islands of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel on Storm lures and grubs.

Grey trout averaging around 16 inches are mixed in with nice sea mullet and croaker near the Concrete Ships and the Kiptopeke Pier right now, while greys are also available around the high rise section of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. Respectable croaker are also making their usual run within the back waters of Oyster. Puppy drum are hitting within lower bay inlets, along with ½-pound spot, and some keeper-sized flounder.

Spadefish are schooled around ocean wrecks and buoys, the Chesapeake Light Tower, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, and the Cell. Although some larger fish are noted within the schools, most spadefish are raging to about 5 pounds. Triggerfish are also out in full force in these same locations, basically becoming a nuisance. Sheepshead catches are still very scattered, but the biggest fish are coming from the Seagull Fishing Pier located at the 1<sup>st</sup> island of the Bay Bridge Tunnel, where a sheepshead over 12 pounds was landed this week.

Another highly esteemed species is also stirring a subdued rumbling among Eastern Shore anglers. Reports of hookups and landings of tarpon are circulating throughout the community this week.

Amberjack are taking live bait and jigs at the Southern Towers, as well as several offshore wrecks, which offer a great fight for those ready for a brawl.

Offshore, the billfish are gaining more consideration with white and blue marlin catches on the rise. This should be a good weekend for marlin, with an easterly wind complimented by a full moon. A few large yellowfin tuna are now showing up at the docks, but the main catch is still revolving around nice bluefin tuna ranging to over 100 pounds. Most boats are also encountering dolphin, king mackerel, as well as some big wahoo.

### **Virginia Middle Bay**

Roger, of Jett's Hardware, reports there has been very good fishing action over the past week with Spanish mackerel making a good showing around Buoy 62 and south to the mouth of the Rappahannock River. Large drum are also in the mix with a 44" fish released this week. Bluefish continue to work the same areas as the mackerel. Small croaker and spot are still available, as well as flounder around the Smith Point jetties and Light, although the current size limit means a lot are being returned to the water to grow up.

Dan at Smith Point Marina reports the number of people fishing has declined some, but there are some nice flounder to be found by those willing to put in the time. The popular spot for these flatties is still the jetties and light around the mouth of the Potomac River.

At Garrett's Marina, reports of croaker of varying sizes have come in. There are still striped bass to be played with, but they are currently out of season.

Capt. Jim Thompson reports that spot fishing has been great this week. The Spike off Deltaville and Cherry Point in the Piankatank River have been winners. The spot are growing very fast, and some larger ones are arriving each day. Anglers are also catching numerous flounder in both the Rappahannock and Piankatank rivers, at the mouth of each. Flounder fishing at the Cell is hit and miss, but it's worth the trip to try your luck. Plenty of bluefish at Windmill Point along with good size Spanish mackerel, but the run is not

yet in full swing.

Jerry Thrash, of Queen's Creek Outfitters, contributed the following:

Spot are biting well and the catch includes a few #1-sized fish. The best places for spot are the Spike and at Butlers Hole. Large croaker were available east of Buoy 42, and some fish were up to 16 inches in length. Along Windmill Bar, bluefish and Spanish mackerel were available. Seven citation flounder were weighed in this week. Flounder fishing at Buoy 42 and in the Cell area improved dramatically during the week, and several anglers caught their limits. Small to medium spadefish continue to bite at the Cell and at Wolftrap Light. Speckled trout fishing improved this week in local waters. Three citations were reported. Speckled trout are being caught in the Piankatank, at Cherry Point, and at the Hole-in-the-Wall. Small red drum mixed with croaker and spot are available in the creeks and along shorelines.

### **Virginia Beach**

There were numerous tuna catches last week, according to staff at the Virginia Beach Fishing Center. Most of the catch is bluefin, but a few yellowfin were caught as well. Several dolphin and marlin were hooked, and Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and wahoo were reported offshore as well. Inshore, taylor bluefish and Spanish mackerel were caught, and the headboats reported large catches of small croaker. In the inlet, flounder were found with a one in ten keeper rate. Scattered spot, puppy drum, and taylor bluefish were found there as well.

According to staff at Fisherman's Wharf Marina, offshore fishing has been really hot. Numerous bluefin tuna were reported, mostly from the 26-Mile Hill. Marlin fishing has been excellent around the 100-line. Inshore, anglers have been very quiet, so staff has little to report.

### **Virginia Piers**

Anglers are catching spot, croaker, flounder, and bluefish at the Ocean View Pier. This week, spot fishing has been especially productive in the morning, and fishing for the other species has been successful just after dark.

Numerous spot were reported at the Lynnhaven Pier, along with nice-sized sea mullet, croaker, and flounder (with a few keepers). Spanish mackerel were biting, and bluefish were around in the mornings.

At the Virginia Beach Pier, catches included bluefish, Spanish mackerel, sea mullet, spadefish and spot. The first king mackerel in many years was also caught this weekend. The citation-sized fish weighed in at 20 pounds.

A 53-pound, 2-ounce king mackerel broke the pier record this Tuesday at the Sandbridge Pier (also called the Little Island Fishing Pier). Other catches consisted of bluefish, spot, skate, and sea mullet, with an additional king mackerel and a few tarpon.

## **Outer Banks, NC**

Offshore fishing in the Nags Head area has provided a bounty of yellowfin and bigeye tuna. The billfish action to continue to be solid as well with catches of all three species. The dolphin action has slowed, but this should improve again as this is usually a busy time of the year for dolphin. Midrange anglers continue find triggerfish, black sea bass, amberjack, and striped bass. People fishing just outside the breakers have been able to catch bluefish and Spanish mackerel.

Anglers fishing from the piers and surf have seen strong bursts of activity from bluefish as well as good bottom fishing for sea mullet and croaker. Red drum landings have also been on the rise lately for the surf fishermen. Inshore anglers have been rewarded with good keeper ratios of flounder and speckled trout, and red drum action around the Melvin Daniels Bridge. Some weakfish have been caught in the green Island Slough as well.

Surf fishing south of Oregon Inlet has been hurt by the strong north-east winds. Only a few flounder, bluefish, and spot were being found early in the weekend with the action picking up for bluefish by Monday in the ramp 43 and 55 areas. In the sounds, the speckled trout action has been good for people looking to get out of the wind.

The offshore action out of Cape Hatteras has been good for billfish as well as a few dolphin, amberjack, and wahoo. Inshore, the speckled trout, red drum, and Spanish mackerel fishing has provided a good variety for those wetting their lines.

If you have additional information or would like further details contact Joe Grist at (757) 247-2237.

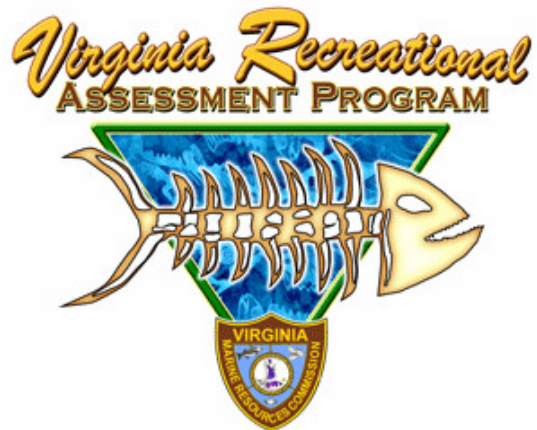
Please credit the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's THE SALTWATER REVIEW as the source of the fishing information.

# Get Hooked!

## Report at

[www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com)

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission wants to know about the saltwater fish you caught and if you threw it back or took it home for dinner. How big was it? What species was it? Where did you catch it? This self-reported catch-and-release information will be posted on-line, giving the recreational angler a broader picture of what everyone else is catching -- and where.



The Fisherman's Journal is a tool intended to benefit the individual angler, the fishing community, and fishery managers. It allows individual anglers to keep an easy-to-retrieve record of their successful fishing experiences. It allows the fishing community to share and learn about other anglers' experiences. Finally, it benefits fishery managers by allowing them to assess fish populations by analyzing data provided by you, the recreational fisherman.

You will be able to report catch-and-release ranges, in addition to individual fish kept or released.

On those days that you catch-and-release 50 bluefish, you can just report the number caught and a range of lengths. Reporting individual measurements on more highly prized species -- such as Red Drum, Striped Bass and Flounder -- provides a greater benefit for everyone.

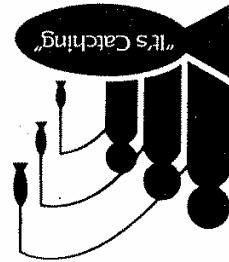
Anglers also may report their fishing trip information, including general location, time of day, weather and water conditions and type of gear and bait used. This information could be extremely valuable to other anglers to give them an idea of what is caught, where it is caught, and what bait is working on what species.

This self-reporting program will help anglers to become more successful and will provide fishery managers with important anecdotal information on recreational catches. The voluntary on-line reporting system is called the "Saltwater Fisherman's Journal," and is found at [www.vasaltwaterjournal.com](http://www.vasaltwaterjournal.com).

A screenshot of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's "Recreational Fishing Online Reporting" website. The page has a blue header with the commission's name and logo. Below the header, there's a section titled "Recreational Saltwater Fishing" with a "Welcome Jgrist," message. A prominent message states "Red Drum Reports are Needed!" and explains that they are collecting length data from red drum that anglers catch-and-release. Another section titled "New 2008 Tautog Regs" lists fishing regulations: Closed Season (May 1 through June 24), Minimum Size Limit (14 inches), and Possession Limit (4 per person). A statistics box on the left shows data for June 16, 2008: Members: 1,457, Trips: 295, and Catches: 3,941. At the bottom, there are "Related Links" and "Help" sections.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

TAKE A FRIEND FISHING



FISHERIES PLANS/STATISTICS OFFICE  
VIRGINIA MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION  
2600 WASHINGTON AVE., 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA 23607

*Practice*

## CAREFUL CATCH

**REDUCE STRESS FACTORS THAT KILL FISH**

**Exhaustion \* Loss of Slime \* Wounds \* Time out of Water**





ERROR: IOError  
OFFENDING COMMAND: image  
STACK: